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PRESS RELEASE

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Three District Men Plead Guilty in Carjackings -Two Vehicles Taken at Gunpoint Within Three Hours -

WASHINGTON - Three District men pleaded guilty today to charges stemming from two armed carjackings that took place in June, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Andre Gaddis, Terence Lofton, and Andre Watson admitted their roles in a pair of armed carjackings that occurred within a matter of hours in the Logan Circle area of Northwest Washington. The three defendants pled guilty today before the Honorable Ann O'Regan Keary in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

Gaddis, 18, of the 1400 block of 4th Street SW, pled guilty to two counts of carjacking and one count of carrying a pistol without a license. Lofton, 18, of the 5300 block of E Street SE, pled guilty to one count of carjacking. Watson, 19, of Oxon Hill, Md., pled guilty to one count of unauthorized use of a vehicle and one count of felony Bail Reform Act violation.

The defendants are to be sentenced on Dec. 1, 2010.

According to evidence presented to the Court, the first carjacking took place about 11:25 p.m. on June 13, 2010. The victim was parked in his Toyota Camry in the 2000 block of 13th Street NW. A black Toyota Avalon with four occupants pulled up to his car and blocked him. Gaddis, the front-seat passenger of the Avalon, ordered the victim out of the vehicle, while the rear-seat passenger pointed a nine millimeter pistol at the victim's head. Gaddis got into the driver's seat of the victim's vehicle, and both vehicles then headed northbound on 13th Street.

The second carjacking occurred about 1:55 a.m. on June 14, 2010. The victim of this crime was sitting in his Hyundai Santa Fe, parked in the 1500 block of 16th Street NW, when a black four-door sedan with four male occupants pulled in front of him and blocked in his vehicle. Lofton and Gaddis got out of the sedan. Then, while Gaddis acted as a lookout, Lofton approached the driver's side window of the victim's car, pointed a pistol at the victim, ordered the victim out of his car, and demanded everything in his pockets. After the victim gave Lofton

his wallet, bank cards, and money, Lofton got into the driver's seat of the victim's car, while Gaddis returned to the black sedan. Both vehicles fled southbound on 16th Street.

The victim flagged down a police officer and provided a brief physical description of the suspects and his car. About 20 minutes after the officer broadcast a description of the Santa Fe over the police radio, another officer observed the victim's vehicle approximately three miles from the crime scene. When the officer attempted to stop the vehicle, the driver, Watson, led police on a half-hour, high-speed chase through the District of Columbia and Maryland that ended only when the vehicle crashed into a fence in the 1300 block of South Capitol Street. Gaddis, Lofton and Watson were all arrested at the scene of the crash. Police recovered a loaded nine millimeter semiautomatic pistol from the Santa Fe after the crash.

After a preliminary hearing on June 24, 2010, Watson was released by the Court after signing notice to appear at a status hearing on July 27, 2010. Watson intentionally failed to appear and a bench warrant was issued.

In announcing the guilty pleas, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of Detective Tomas Rosenberg and Detective Brian Devine of the Metropolitan Police Department's Carjacking Unit, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Emily A. Miller, who investigated the case.

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